



COYOTE MANAGEMENT

To report a recurring problem with coyotes, please call the Los Angeles County Agricultural Commissioner/Weight and Measure Department – Pest Management Division at (626) 575-5462.

Living with Coyotes

Observing wild animals is one of the many benefits of living in or near wildlife habitat. The experience can turn unpleasant, or even dangerous, however, when well-meaning people feed wildlife. When fed by people, coyotes become unnaturally bold and the result is conflict between coyotes and people, which too often ends in serious harm, or even death, to the people or the coyotes.

The coyote (*Canis latrans*), a member of the dog family, is native to California. It closely resembles a small German shepherd dog with the exception of the long snout and bushy, black-tipped tail. The coyote's high-pitched, yodel-like yapping can frequently be heard at night. Coyotes are extremely adaptable and can survive on whatever food is available. They hunt rabbits, mice, birds and other small animals, as well as young deer and sheep. They will also feed on the carcasses of dead animals and will accept "hand-outs" from people in the form of table scraps, pet food and garbage.

Coyotes are found throughout California, from desert and mountain habitats to urban areas. Problems occur when people begin feeding coyotes, either deliberately or inadvertently. Coyotes will quickly lose their natural fear of people and become bold, even aggressive. Pets are often attacked, injured or killed by coyotes. Although extremely rare, in a few tragic cases, coyotes have attacked small children, causing serious injury or even death.

Help Keep Coyotes Wild

We can reduce conflicts with coyotes by ensuring they remain cautious of humans. Practice these safety guidelines and encourage your neighbors to do the same:

Never Feed a Coyote

Deliberately feeding coyotes puts you, your pets and your neighbors at risk. You may be inadvertently feeding coyotes by leaving pet food or garbage where they can get to it. Feed pets indoors or promptly remove outdoor dishes when pets finish meals. Store bags of pet food indoors. Use trashcans with lids that clamp shut, which will prevent spilling if the cans are tipped over. If you leave garbage outside, don't use trash bags as garbage containers; coyotes can easily rip them open and scatter contents. Put trash containers out the morning of the scheduled pick-up, rather than the night before. This will give the coyotes less time to scavenge. Clear brush and dense weeds from around dwellings to reduce

protective cover for coyotes and make the area less attractive to rodents. Coyotes and other predators may be attracted to areas where rodents are concentrated, such as wood and brush piles and seed storage areas.

Protect Children

Although rare, coyote attacks have seriously injured young children. Never leave small children unattended in areas known to be frequented by coyotes, even in your yard.

Protect Pets and Livestock

Keep small pets, such as cats, rabbits and small dogs, indoors. Don't allow them to run free at any time. They are easy, favored prey. Some coyotes seek cats in residential areas. Large dogs should be brought inside after dark, and never be allowed to run loose. Rabbit hutches should have a solid bottom. A hutch standing above ground, with only a wire bottom, makes your rabbit an easy mark. When building a chicken coop, dig a one-foot trench around its perimeter. Extend the chicken wire fence well into the trench, then bury it.

Use Negative Reinforcement

If coyotes begin frequenting your neighborhood, let them know they are not welcome. Make loud noises, throw rocks, or spray them with a garden hose. For everyone's safety, it is essential that coyotes retain their natural wariness of humans.

Report Threats and Attacks Immediately

If you see a coyote behaving aggressively or attacking people or pets, contact the Los Angeles County Agricultural Commissioner/Weight and Measure Department at (626) 575-5462. If an encounter or attack occurs after business hours, call the Department of Fish and Game's 24-hour dispatch center at (916) 445-0045. The Department will take appropriate action.

For more information, contact the California Department of Fish and Game – Southern California Office at (909) 484-0167.